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Chairman: Mr. Galuška ..... (Czech Republic)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 107: Crime prevention and criminal justice (*continued*) (A/54/3, A/54/69-E/1999/8 and Add.1, A/54/289 and A/54/340; A/C.3/54/2; A/C.3/54/L.3-L.6)

Agenda item 108: International drug control (*continued*) (A/54/3, A/54/186, A/54/293-E/1999/119 and A/54/314-S/1999/942; A/C.3/54/L.7)

1. **Ms. Holikova** (Czech Republic) said that the increasing seriousness of the abuse of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances was a challenge to societies and their economies. Globalization created the conditions for transnational organized crime because of the erosion of traditional ties and values. While primary responsibility for combating drug abuse lay with individual Governments, their action required the support of more effective international cooperation, including technical assistance to affected countries. It was encouraging that the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) and other United Nations bodies and agencies were actively participating in combating drug abuse, but it was necessary to give more attention to the coordination of their work and to improve information exchanges in order to avoid duplication. The world community had agreed on a medium-term strategy included in the Political Declaration adopted at the twentieth special session of the General Assembly, together with plans of action and the Declaration on the Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction. Unfortunately, the small number of countries that had ratified, and above all implemented, the fundamental international drug control instruments compromised the attainment of the intended objectives.

2. Her country had taken important steps to adapt its legal system to international norms. An amendment to the Penal Code criminalized the possession of small quantities of drugs exceeding the amount for personal use only. A new law tightening the regime for precursors and essential chemicals had been adopted and a bill on probation and mediation services was to be discussed. A system of special training for prosecutors, judges and probation officers dealing with drug issues had been introduced. The status of police forces had been extended to the customs authorities, a step which had had practical results in operations against drug trafficking, both in the national territory and in the context of international cooperation.

3. Her country intended to strengthen its cooperation with the other four member countries of the Central European Cooperation Programme because of recent developments in the situation in the Balkans where the so-called Kosovo Albanian mafia controlled the heroin market. UNDCP and the other European law enforcement structures should give the situation their attention.

4. As a member of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, her country was convinced that the Commission should actively contribute to the implementation of all the anti-drug strategies. Once it had been completed, the draft convention against transnational organized crime would become an important tool for strengthening cooperation between countries in combating organized crime, which was not restricted to drug trafficking. However it appeared from the ongoing discussions on the draft convention that its provisions would not go beyond the framework of the 1988 Convention, thus enabling criminal organizations to take advantage of the loopholes in national legislation.

5. **Mr. Sychov** (Belarus), speaking on agenda item 107 on behalf of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation and Tajikistan, said that the international community should combine its efforts to draw up a single strategy to combat the expansion of crime throughout the world. The countries on whose behalf he was speaking therefore supported the proposals for financial and other strengthening of the crime prevention and criminal justice programme of the United Nations and all the Secretariat bodies engaged in combating crime. They were ready to cooperate with the Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention, from which they would like to receive aid in the form of expert services, advisory services and technical assistance. They also welcomed the outcome of the eighth session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and were gratified that preparations for the Tenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and the Treatment of Offenders were proceeding well. Finally, they noted with satisfaction that work was continuing on the convention against transnational organized crime and its protocols, and supported the idea of organizing a conference of plenipotentiaries to adopt those texts in 2000.

6. At the regional and subregional levels, the efforts made by the Council of Europe, the Council of Baltic Sea States and other organizations were to be welcomed. in May 1996, the member countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) had adopted an intergovernmental programme of joint measures to combat organized crime in the CIS countries up to the year 2000. They were currently working on a similar project to run

until 2003. The question of combating crime had been considered in September 1999 at Bishkek at the first session of the Intergovernmental Commission of the Central Asian Economic Community. The CIS council of heads of security organs and special services and the CIS council of heads of customs services were coordinating the action undertaken.

7. The revision of the convention on legal aid and legal relations in civil, family and criminal proceedings of 22 January 1993 remained on the agenda. The CIS countries were currently working on a draft cooperation agreement to combat computer crime and on a draft cooperation plan between the bodies responsible for implementation of the laws in the CIS member countries. Those bodies were already cooperating on the training of staff, operational or prevention measures and the exchange of information (the "Avtopoisk" system in the context of the intergovernmental data bank).

8. **Mr. Hadjiagyrou** (Cyprus) said that the United Nations International Drug Control Programme and the Centre for International Crime Prevention had done valuable work in helping developing countries and countries with economies in transition to combat organized crime, trafficking in human beings, and corruption. They were to be commended for mainstreaming a gender perspective in their strategies. The elaboration of an international legal instrument was indispensable for responding to the increasingly sophisticated operations of criminal organizations. His delegation therefore welcomed the progress achieved at the eighth session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice towards the formulation of a convention against transnational organized crime. His country had ratified all United Nations conventions aimed at increasing cooperation in criminal justice matters and was cooperating closely with the European Union as an associated State. Cyprus had also concluded bilateral agreements with a number of other countries on combating transnational crime and drug trafficking. Well aware that the country, which had evolved into an important offshore financial centre, might readily be used by transnational organized crime for money-laundering purposes, his Government had taken steps, chief of which was the passage in 1996 of a draconian law on the prevention and suppression of money-laundering.

9. Drug abuse constituted a grave threat to civilized societies, and no nation had remained immune to its devastating effects. Implementation of the relevant international instruments and enhancement of national and international capacity were essential to attaining the goal of a drug-free world. However, one must also address the root causes of the problem, chiefly poverty and socio-economic imbalances. To reduce consumption and production of drugs, both crop substitution programmes and programmes of social rehabilitation for drug addicts were needed. The twentieth special session of the General Assembly had been a decisive step in mobilizing the international community to confront the threat that drugs posed to society.

10. Although it was still relatively drug-free, Cyprus had put in place a proactive national policy of prevention. Recognizing that as an important transshipment point in the eastern Mediterranean Cyprus could well be used to funnel drugs into Europe, the Government was actively pursuing a policy of strict customs controls in cooperation with other countries. However, it could not exercise control in the areas of the Republic of Cyprus under Turkish military occupation, where, according to information received, money-laundering operations and drug trafficking were rife. His delegation wished to urge the necessity of mobilizing resources on a global level and establishing effective justice systems based on human rights and partnership between States and international organizations in order to combat crime and preserve the rule of law.

11. **Mr. Amorós Nuñez** (Cuba), speaking on agenda item 107, said that globalization, which brought in its train interdependence and a widening gap between rich and poor countries, had facilitated the spread of transnational criminal organizations. They had taken advantage of the progress in information technology, the unprecedented increase in trade and the deregulation of financial transactions to expand their illegal operations. Cooperation must be intensified to address the problem, particularly within the framework of the United Nations congresses on the prevention of crime and the treatment of offenders, which offered the opportunity to exchange information and experience with regard to criminal investigation and in the area of criminal law and policy. The Tenth Congress, which was to take place in Vienna in April 2000 and was to focus on the theme of transnational organized crime, should result in the adoption of a political declaration that would reflect the results of the regional preparatory meetings, as called for in General Assembly resolution 53/110. The elaboration of a United Nations convention against transnational organized crime and three protocols thereto were directly related to that work. While unreservedly supporting the process, his delegation felt that the need to finish the work rapidly should not be allowed to diminish the quality of the text.

12. One could not speak of preventing and combating crime or of international cooperation in that area without stressing the primary role of national laws, which were ultimately what enabled each country to confront crime occurring within its borders, whether or not it had an international dimension. Respect for the national laws of each country was the necessary basis for success in multilateral and bilateral cooperation. Each Government must take the initiative to exchange information, coordinate its operations with those of other Governments and collaborate with them in combating crimes committed on its own territory, especially when those crimes might have international repercussions. On the other hand, his delegation condemned unilateral action against international crime, which only made the search for solutions to that complex problem more difficult.

13. **Ms. Otiti** (Uganda) said that, in trying to find ways to treat offenders to prepare them to re-enter society, one should guard against excessive indulgence, which they might exploit to regain their liberty and commit fresh crimes. There should be highly organized machinery prepared to deal with crime at all times. Her delegation wished to commend the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice for its efforts and was pleased to note that the Centre for International Crime Prevention would be directing more of its activities towards assisting developing countries, countries with economies in transition and countries taking a subregional approach. It welcomed the report of the Secretary-General on the African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (A/54/340) and was grateful to the donors who had enabled the Institute to conduct its activities, despite limited resources; it was to be hoped that greater efforts would be made to help the Institute to fulfil its mandate. Her Government had taken steps to address the problem of rising crime. A judicial commission of inquiry into police corruption was currently conducting a country-wide investigation in order to ensure that the forces of order did not themselves turn to crime.

14. Violence against women was considered an offence. The Constitution of Uganda recognized the unique role women played in society and, in respect for their traditional maternal functions, required the State to protect them and their rights and prohibited acts against their interest, welfare and dignity. A coalition on violence against women had been set up, and a shelter for battered women had been established. A Ministry of Ethics and Integrity, headed by a woman minister, had been created to study the problem of crime and find solutions so that Ugandans could safely enjoy their rights.

15. **Mr. Mra** (Myanmar), speaking on agenda item 108, said that his delegation associated itself with the statement made by the representative of Thailand on behalf of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN). Only with an effective global strategy and concerted international efforts could the world deal with the drug menace. It was encouraging that the international community had, at the twentieth special session of the General Assembly, reaffirmed its determination to meet the challenge.

16. His Government had made it the nation's top priority to combat the problem of narcotic drugs. In the past, when it had had little control in the border areas where the poppy was grown, its strategy had focused on law enforcement. Since the problem was a complex one, however, the Government had launched a multibillion kyat project to eliminate poppy cultivation by promoting the living standards of the national races and bringing alternative development by providing extensive new infrastructure and introducing substitute crops. It had drawn up a 15-year master plan, in cooperation with ethnic leaders who had signed peace agreements with the Government, to eliminate poppy cultivation by 2014, eradicate opium production and encourage local participation in such activities. The plan, which was being implemented in 51 townships throughout the country, had already achieved positive results.

17. Despite some successes in combating drugs, such as bringing opium production down to its lowest level for 10 years and seizing large quantities of heroin, opium and amphetamines, Myanmar and the whole region were faced with the new menace of the illicit manufacture, traffic and abuse of amphetamine-type stimulants and their precursors. The new drugs, which spread quickly among young people, were produced, using precursors and drug-making equipment smuggled in from neighbouring countries, along the porous borders of Myanmar. The Government was currently redirecting its efforts to address the problem as a matter of priority in cooperation with the countries concerned in the region.

18. Money laundering was also a matter of concern for the Government, as it could undermine the country's financial and monetary system. In 1995 rules providing for effective measures against money-laundering activities had been introduced. The rules also empowered a committee to carry out financial investigations and seize property in any suspected cases of money laundering. In addition, the rules provided for bilateral and trilateral cooperation in transboundary situations of money laundering. Another committee had since 1993 worked on scrutinizing all kinds

of property and confiscating any that had been gained through drug-related crime.

19. Myanmar had signed several regional, subregional and bilateral cooperation agreements, with the focus on reducing drug trafficking and production, eliminating poppy cultivation through economic and social development programmes and reducing the demand for and consumption of drugs. In addition, since 1993 it had conducted many region-wide opium yield surveys in cooperation with the United States of America.

20. His Government, which was absolutely committed to the total eradication of narcotic drugs, would continue the implementation of its 15-year plan and would cooperate with other ASEAN members. International assistance would nonetheless be most useful.

21. **Mr. Joedo** (Indonesia) said that his delegation also wished to associate itself with the statement made by the representative of Thailand on behalf of ASEAN. His delegation supported the outcome of the twentieth special session of the General Assembly, particularly the adoption of the Declaration on the Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction and the target of getting new and enhanced strategies in place by 2003, with measurable results by 2008. The Action Plan for the Implementation of the Declaration offered comprehensive guidance and should receive the full attention of Member States.

22. Under the Action Plan, requesting countries could receive technical assistance from the United Nations International Drug Control Programme and other relevant organizations for the establishment of national systems for monitoring, setting up databases and sharing information. The epidemiological infrastructure that the Programme was to establish should also help demand-reduction programmes assess the situation more accurately and would be useful for States reporting to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs.

23. His delegation drew attention to the budgetary implications of the decision at the special session to expand the Programme's mandate. The imbalance between contributions to special-purpose funds and those to general-purpose funds was disquieting, since it limited the room for manoeuvre available to the Executive Director of the Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention to implement the Programme's programme of activities. The Economic and Social Council had made a useful recommendation in that regard in its resolution 1999/30.

24. The Political Declaration adopted at the special session had set goals and target dates regarding the illicit manufacture, traffic and abuse of amphetamine-type stimulants and their precursors, the growth rate of which had reached alarming levels. The subject should therefore be given higher priority, as should the issue of psychotropic substances, including synthetic drugs. His delegation therefore welcomed the initiatives taken to assist Governments in dealing with the problem.

25. Indonesia had become not only a transit country but also a country with a drug abuse problem of its own, which the recent economic and social crisis had undoubtedly exacerbated. The Government had therefore established a national Narcotics Coordinating Agency, which would ensure coordination between the many bodies that were required to implement policy at national and local levels. The Government was also undertaking an information campaign against drugs, as well as enhancing the legislative framework. The Government had become a party to the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988 and encouraged all Member States to accede to it.

26. His Government also fully supported the work of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme and welcomed its provision of technical assistance to developing countries. It took note of the outcome of the eighth session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and welcomed the preparations being made in advance of the Tenth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders. With regard to the elaboration of a convention against transnational organized crime, his delegation considered that the "one plus three" formula, used in finalizing the draft, should not mean that the three need be ratified together.

27. With regard to the death penalty, his delegation believed that it was the responsibility of each country to choose for itself, and its choice should be respected.

28. **Mr. von Kaufmann** (Canada), speaking also on behalf of Australia and New Zealand, said that the three countries remained deeply concerned about the impact of the abuse of and trafficking in illicit drugs on their citizens and societies, as well as on the political stability of source countries and some transit countries, which were affected by increasing violence and trafficking in firearms. They were also concerned about the rise in drug use in countries where it had not been prevalent in the past, and especially among young people.

29. Committed to dealing with the drug problem within their borders through balanced and effective national strategies, Australia, New Zealand and Canada were

cooperating through regional and multilateral organizations. The United Nations played a vital role in that regard through the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, the United Nations International Drug Control Programme and the International Narcotics Control Board. The twentieth special session of the General Assembly had resulted in an unprecedented political commitment that had to be maintained and translated into action. They welcomed the progress made by the inter-sessional working group of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs on the guidelines for submitting national reports, which would help gauge the progress made by countries and the international community in fulfilling the commitments made at the special session. They also welcomed the progress made on the questionnaire for implementing the Declaration on the Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction.

30. Turning to item 107, he said that, in an increasingly open world, criminal justice and crime prevention were matters requiring international action, rather than simply national policy, and called for multilateral agreement and operation. The convention against transnational organized crime and its three protocols would be a powerful tool for law-enforcement agencies and would enhance the efforts to develop an international legal regime to counter organized crime. The three countries would do their best to contribute to the work of the Tenth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, which would address key challenges such as transnational organized crime, computer crime and corruption.

31. The three countries were pleased to note that the international community was gaining greater understanding of the economic and social costs of corruption, was more willing to discuss it, and had more interest in transparency and the development of international instruments to combat corruption. They welcomed the work of the Centre for International Crime Prevention.

32. **Mr. Medrek** (Morocco) said that, in view of the rapid increase in crime around the world, the international community had to make greater efforts, develop a common and global prevention strategy based on true cooperation, with the emphasis on training, information and the sharing of data, experience and technology. It should also finalize new international instruments to curb crime. Morocco therefore supported the setting up of the ad hoc committee to elaborate a convention against transnational organized crime, and looked forward to the meeting in Vienna in April 2000 of the Tenth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders on the topic "Crime and justice: meeting the challenges of the twenty-first century".

33. Drug trafficking generated such enormous profits that it constituted 8 per cent of world trade, as shown by the annual report of UNDCP for 1997. To combat that phenomenon, in 1998 many countries had announced the launching of programmes and campaigns to eradicate cannabis, cocaine and poppy-straw cultivation; they had also destroyed thousands of hectares of illicit cultivation and dismantled a very large number of laboratories.

34. Morocco had begun a national strategy against drugs by setting up the National Drug Commission in 1977 and by beginning a reform of its legislation in 1996. It had also devised an integrated economic and social programme to develop the provinces in the north of the country; implementation was entrusted to the Agency for Economic and Social Advancement and Development, which reported directly to the Prime Minister. It had also created an anti-drug coordination unit in 1996. Furthermore, it had set up a well-equipped security unit on the Mediterranean coast. The reward of those efforts had been the seizure in July 1997 of six tons of pure cocaine. That whole action plan was a significant financial burden for Morocco, equivalent to 5 per cent of total investments provided for in the State budget.

35. For a number of years, Morocco had been strengthening bilateral cooperation through agreements concluded with various States, including Germany, Hungary, Poland, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, as well as multilateral cooperation with international organizations, such as UNDCP, which had sent a mission to Morocco in April 1999.

36. **Mrs. Brubbey** (Ghana) said that her country had welcomed the Political Declaration and Action Plan adopted at the twentieth special session of the General Assembly as the international community's strategy to reduce illegal drug trafficking, abuse and production by the year 2008. It was also hoped that the ad hoc committee which was elaborating a convention against transnational organized crime would complete its work on schedule so that the convention could be adopted by the end of 2000, although it was clear that only a concerted effort by Member States to implement the provisions would curb the activities of criminal organizations. Ghana welcomed the progress made in drafting the protocols to the convention against transnational organized crime, and especially the protocol against illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in

firearms, their parts and components and ammunition, as those activities had undermined the security of West and Central Africa, a situation that had led the States members of the Economic Community of West African States to adopt a moratorium, endorsed by the Organization of African Unity, on the import, export and manufacture of light weapons.

37. Concerned at the uncertain situation of the Centre for International Crime Prevention, her delegation believed that that body should be provided with adequate resources to provide Member States with the technical assistance needed to ensure the rule of law and juvenile justice, and to elaborate model legislation on mutual assistance in criminal matters. Her delegation was pleased to note the new orientation of the Centre's programmes, as indicated in section VI of the Secretary-General's report (A/54/289). She also welcomed the initiatives taken to strengthen the management of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme. Lastly, she thanked the Austrian Government for offering to host, in April 2000, the Tenth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, and urged that it should be a meeting at the highest political level.

38. While her delegation believed that, in view of the extent of the problem, the fight against drugs should be a shared responsibility of all Member States, it pointed out that the ever-increasing demand for drugs in a number of developed countries required a disproportionate effort from developing countries in relation to their resources. For that reason, her delegation urged all Member States to commit themselves to implementing the Declaration on the Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction adopted at the twentieth special session of the General Assembly, and called on those that had not yet done so to ratify or accede to the three conventions on international drug control in order that the objectives for 2003 and 2008 might be attained.

39. At the subregional level, her Government was cooperating with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in the context of the protocols on mutual assistance on crime. At the national level, in 1990 it had enacted the Narcotic Control and Enforcement Law and established the Narcotic Control Board, which organized campaigns, particularly in primary and secondary schools, to educate people with the help of the media. In addition, her Government had criminalized money-laundering and decreed that all proceeds from drugs were liable to seizure. The treatment and rehabilitation programmes put in place by her Government had not been as successful as it might have wished, largely because of inadequate resources. In that connection, her delegation believed that drug-dependent individuals should not be treated as psychiatric patients, and that rehabilitation centres established by Governments should be separate from psychiatric hospitals.

40. The drug issue was further complicated by poverty, as it was difficult for the world's poor not to turn to lucrative illicit crops. It was therefore crucial to introduce alternative crops and to strengthen international efforts to implement anti-poverty strategies. At the national level, Governments should propose rural credit schemes for farmers that would cushion them against crop failures due to various causes, and should intensify efforts to address rural-urban migration, while launching programmes to generate urban employment.

41. In conclusion, the Ghanaian delegation commended the United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders for its efforts to promote and coordinate regional technical cooperation activities; the Institute's capacity should be strengthened to enable it to support national anti-crime policies. Her delegation therefore called on Member States to honour their financial obligations to the Institute.

42. **Mr. Ubalijoro** (Rwanda), speaking under agenda item 107, said that better enforcement of international criminal law was imperative if justice was to be ensured throughout the world. Just as social control at the national level required that law-abiding citizens should be protected from law violators through prosecution and punishment of the latter, adequate law enforcement mechanisms must be developed internationally. The comprehensive nature and gravity of the crimes covered by international criminal law only underscored the importance of the process. The consequences of the crime of genocide, for example, were clearly more ominous than those of any single violation of domestic law.

43. Even though genocide was prohibited by international criminal law, genocidal acts continued to be committed throughout the world, under the passive gaze of the international community. By refusing to take effective action, the international community had made a mockery of the most sacred values of civilization. Unless it protected the fundamental rights of the human person by enforcing international criminal law, crime prevention and criminal justice would remain a dead letter.

44. Rwanda was now faced with the enormous task of bringing to justice the over 125,000 persons suspected of participating in the 1994 genocide. In 1995 and 1996, it had adopted the relevant legislation, despite the lack of

resources and trained personnel and a highly volatile political environment. The legislation classified suspects into four categories according to their alleged degree of culpability; the first category included leaders and organizers of the genocide and perpetrators of particularly heinous murders or sexual torture, the second, persons accused of homicide, the third, perpetrators of grave assaults not resulting in death, and the fourth, perpetrators of property crimes. In order to expedite the trials, his Government had also revived a traditional system known as "*gacaca*", which enabled community councils to mete out symbolic justice without shedding blood. That system, which had been used to adjudicate petty theft and small property disputes, would soon be employed to prosecute individuals in categories 2, 3 and 4. Prisoners would be tried in public by local judges on the basis of their testimony and that of the villagers, and would then be either released or punished.

45. The goal of the Rwandan criminal justice system was to protect the right to life, liberty and property, and to deter crime effectively. By that logic, the death penalty made perfect sense. It made the criminal pay for his crime, eliminated recidivism and deterred others from committing the same crime. The execution in April 1998 of 22 genocide masterminds had led many prisoners — who had been encouraged by certain international non-governmental organizations which, for various reasons, cared more about the fate of the condemned murderers than about their victims — to drop their insistence that genocide had never occurred in Rwanda and to resort to plea bargaining with the prosecutors, so long as they did not fall into category 1. It was to be hoped that, by keeping the judicial process on track, the cycle of impunity that had long benefited criminals in his country could be broken.

46. **Ms. Gligorova** (The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) said that narcotics production, trafficking and abuse was continually increasing, undermining the economic and social foundations and the political stability, security and sovereignty of countries, endangering the health of populations, especially that of young people, and demanding national and international measures and strategies to address those problems.

47. Her country was facing problems similar to those of other countries, while also having to grapple with the specific difficulties encountered by all the countries of southeastern Europe. Its efforts to build a democratic civil society and a market economy and ensure respect for human rights and freedoms and the rule of law had profoundly changed its economic, political and social structure. The regional political and economic crisis, particularly in Kosovo, had also facilitated the expansion of criminal networks within its territory and that of neighbouring countries, worsening the drug problem and contributing to the spread of HIV/AIDS.

48. Her Government, deeply concerned by the existing links between illicit drug production and trafficking and the illegal arms trade, had established a new commission to fight drug abuse, and planned to promulgate laws on corruption, drug abuse, money-laundering and drug precursors. Aware that law enforcement was not the only issue, it was also carrying out prevention, education and social welfare programmes, focusing specifically on children, and was endeavouring to facilitate the treatment and rehabilitation of drug users in accordance with General Assembly resolutions. Furthermore, poppy production and processing was strictly controlled. Nevertheless, her Government still had to complete the master plan of activities, finish adopting the proposed legislation, create a mechanism for the control of precursors and of money-laundering, establish educational programmes and launch public information campaigns to prevent drug abuse and reduce demand.

49. Her country, which had also acceded to various international conventions concerning the drug problem, intended to base its legal framework on existing international norms. It was actively cooperating with the international community in its efforts to counter the drug problem.

50. Since the drug problem knew no borders, regional, subregional and international cooperation needed to be strengthened. During the twentieth special session of the General Assembly, Member States had committed themselves to acting together to combat the root causes of the drug problem, namely, poverty, unemployment and inequality. Her delegation had taken a number of measures to implement the outcome of the special session. As a member of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs for the period 2000-2004, it was determined to participate in the efforts of the United Nations system, especially UNDCP, to strengthen cooperation among Balkan countries and the countries of south-eastern Europe.

51. Her Government supported the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Elaboration of an International Convention against Transnational Organized Crime in drafting the Convention and its three protocols. Transnational crime was one of the greatest challenges of the late twentieth century, and it was to be hoped that the Tenth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime

and the Treatment of Offenders would emphasize the crucial role of the United Nations in that area.

52. **Mr. Issa** (Lebanon), speaking on agenda item 108, said that the difficult economic conditions in his country had forced some farmers to take up the cultivation of narcotic crops again. The Government had reacted by imposing severe penalties against the cultivation of such crops, thereby anticipating the measures advocated by UNDCP and the provisions of resolution S-20/4. Since 1996, his country had been using its own resources to try to implement the goals set by the Programme, as the Executive Director of the Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention had been able to verify for himself during his visit to Lebanon. However, a training programme was required to persuade farmers in Lebanon to grow other crops, and appropriate facilities for the treatment of drug addicts were needed. UNDCP should increase its assistance to Lebanon and should not make such assistance dependent on funds provided by donors, since the latter could tie their aid to conditions that the recipient countries might be unable to meet. During the summer of 1998, his Government had promulgated a new law against the cultivation of narcotic crops and drug trafficking. It ensured that no money-laundering, which went hand in hand with the drug problem, was effected through Lebanese banks, despite the rules of confidentiality which constituted one of the pillars of its liberal economy.

53. **Mr. Pozzo** (Venezuela) said that his delegation associated itself with the statement made by the representative of Mexico on behalf of the Rio Group on agenda item 108.

54. The policies and programmes adopted by States reflected the importance that they accorded to drug control. His delegation agreed with the Secretary-General that the decision of the Administrative Committee on Coordination to consider monitoring the implementation of the follow-up to the twentieth special session of the General Assembly would result in better coordination of international action and the strengthening of the drug control mechanisms of the United Nations system.

55. The action plan to be adopted by the General Assembly was based on the fact that demand reduction was an indispensable pillar in the fight against drugs. It would support the world strategy which advocated the adoption of mutually reinforcing measures to control supply and reduce demand. His Government, whose policies focused mainly on prevention, treatment and the rehabilitation of drug addicts, attached particular importance to the adoption of the action plan. Under the authority of the national committee on the use of illicit drugs, the relevant national institutions had focused their activities on human resource development, scientific research, periodic evaluation and the provision of services to the most vulnerable sectors of society, including young people. The substantial financial efforts made by the private and public sectors were supplemented by bilateral contributions from Colombia, Ecuador and the United States of America and multilateral contributions from the European Union, the United Nations Development Programme and the Organization of American States.

56. His delegation supported the activities carried out by UNDCP with respect to alternative crops in a number of countries, including in the Andean region. Although the raw material necessary to the manufacture of illicit drugs was not produced in Venezuela, the few cannabis and other crops that had been discovered in the west of the country had been destroyed.

57. As far as verification was concerned, the international community should support the UNDCP initiative on the establishment of an independent, neutral and objective global monitoring system to enable States to measure the extent of illicit cultivation on their territory and to take the appropriate measures. The exchange of information and the mobilization of the necessary logistical and financial resources were essential for national capacity-building. His Government was striving to improve institutional and intersectoral coordination.

58. In 1997 his Government had set up an intersectoral committee on the prevention and control of money-laundering, which was composed of representatives of various ministries, the banking and stock market sectors, the Central Bank, the judiciary and the police force. In 1998 it had also adopted provisions on the import, export and marketing of precursors nationwide.

59. While the military authorities and police had improved their methods and capabilities for combating drug trafficking by acquiring greater logistical, financial and human resources, international cooperation still remained essential, since it enabled the States concerned to exchange reliable information and advanced technologies.

60. His delegation also welcomed the initiative mentioned by the Executive Director of the Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention to prevent the smuggling of drugs from a particular country by mobilizing neighbouring countries. Drugs were a worldwide problem which must be addressed in a comprehensive and balanced manner, on the basis of shared responsibilities and full

respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States and the principle of non-interference in their internal affairs.

61. His Government accorded considerable importance to the growing number of multilateral evaluation mechanisms at the regional and international levels. The Latin American countries were currently setting up a mechanism which would enable them to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of national strategies and policies. He hoped that a similar process planned by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs would lead to concrete results in the near future.

The meeting rose at 12.15 p.m.